

16-Week Calendar Open Forum

November 13, 2024

12:00 p.m., Room 3134

Dr. Stearns opened and thanked CCFT for providing lunch.

A 16-week calendar is not new to the college. Work had initially started in 2019-20, and then paused when the pandemic occurred. There will be an opportunity for questions following the presentation.

Overview

A task force was gathered in 2022 to look at an alternate calendar for Cuesta. The minimum requirement for adoption was 1) the change create a neutral to positive net impact on FTES, and 2) there be broad support of the campus community. The task force brought forth a recommendation to move to an academic calendar that included two 16-week semesters, starting no later than 2026-27. All information is currently in draft form and may be found online under Institutional Research/16-Week Calendar Resources.

Fortuitous timing considering the District is moving to a new Attendance Accounting Method and Cal Poly is making their move to semesters (15+1) in 2026-27. The first year their summer will be 8 weeks, 12 weeks the following summer, and then the following year move to a balanced trimester.

Steering Committee is working toward obtaining CCCCCO and Board approval, and communication with the Chancellor's Office is already underway.

Essential elements in this change include 1) Unified class start times (commonality in schedule facilitates students moving from one course to another), 2) Maximized summer to support pre-nursing, STEM, and CE Programs (don't want summer to be too short for adequate offerings to students), 3) Explore 4 and 8-week class delivery options (two colleges moving to 8-week model—Hartnell and Rancho Santiago), 4) Robust summer schedule, and 5) Effective intervention and holistic support model.

Academic Calendar

Dr. Curtis provided a draft 16-week calendar beginning 2026-27. District would lose the ability of in-semester flex days with a 16-week calendar, so the October flex would go away. New flex days would include 4 days before the start of each term. Title V is also changing to include all employees for flex days, not just faculty. The draft schedules reflect that Fall semester begins August 31 and ends December 18; Spring semester begins January 25 and ends May 21. President's holiday is a non-negotiable and the Mon-Weds prior to Thanksgiving is retained. For summer, 6- or 8-week classes could be accommodated and still give 3 weeks of break before classes began in August, as well as the possibility for 10-week classes. There is also a break in the first week of June before the start of summer classes.

For a 16-week calendar and 8 flex days, we have a term length multiplier of 16.8. Our semester could start with or a week before Cal Poly. An early start may help with finding student housing.

Scheduling Grid

Bret Clark shared 16-week sample scheduling options dictated by the term length multiplier and an effort to remain FTES neutral for revenue. In the Units and Inst Method column, a 3-unit lecture and 1 unit lab are not a 4-unit class, but should be looked at separately for scheduling purposes. If meeting for a 3-unit lecture twice a week, instead of instruction for 1 hour and 20 minutes, it would be 1 hour and 25 minutes to have the same amount of contact time.

The proposed grid shows how all classes might be scheduled. Currently, classes may start on the hour or ½ hour, but because of the different lengths of times for the courses, it makes sense to come up with common start and end times (e.g., 12:00, 3:30, 7:15). The grid example also may include a college hour providing an opportunity for all to meet regularly, or accommodate speakers coming to campus when all could attend. Classes would then need to be shifted earlier and later to accommodate the college hour from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. It's also possible to limit the college hour to just two days a week.

Questions and Comments

- An 8:00 a.m. or 8:30 a.m. start time may result in a drop in enrollment due to the earliness of the class to accommodate the college hour. (Highland)
- Compressed 3 or 4-week intersession courses are not part of the plan, but they are not off the table. Past experience with intersession is that no faculty wanted to teach. (Alvarez Pardo)
- For student access, services to accommodate the earlier and later start times will be expanded based upon student need. It will not be started that way, but added as necessary (including Saturday). (Coria)
- Days getting longer or classes moved to fewer ideal times is likely to happen. As term shortens, days must be lengthened, or classes stacked making it more difficult for students to move from one class to another or take multiple classes in the same day. (G. Baxley). Teaching more days is an option, including Friday and Saturday (J. Stearns).
- Santa Barbara City College adjunct professor indicated that the options were limited at SBCC and Friday classes were the norm. Don't want people to be resistant to change, it's hard, but you can get used to it. Students like the 16-week calendar. (SLO)
- Block schedule reflects a mandatory 10-minute passing time period between classes per State of California regulations. (Clark)
- Student feedback is that they prefer shorter terms. Have not heard anything in particular about student start time preferences, but not aware that they've been asked. (J. Stearns)
- The bus schedule will flex for the determined class schedule. Dr. Coria works with RTA. (J. Stearns)
- Basic Needs students who are parents regularly need to be off when their children's school closes and can't return to campus until later when their spouse relieves them with childcare. Adding later, Friday, or Saturday classes would be helpful, but not sure about the early course starts. (DePuy)
- Student worker indicated that Friday and late evening classes would be helpful, particularly for parents. (NCC)

- Came from previous college with 18-week schedule. There was a faculty driven effort to move to a 16-week calendar, but it was voted down. Primary factor was from Classified Senate and Classified Union because of extended working schedules (including Saturday) of lab technicians and student support staff. Felt classified staff were brought into the discussion late and not included in participating as early as faculty. (Bradley) Classified professionals are on steering committee and forum sessions allow classified to bring input forward. In prior experience on campus with 18-week calendar and robust evening and weekend programs, found there was never a lack of individuals looking to work an alternate schedule. (J. Stearns)
- What is the process for approving or not approving the vote? There were unexpected results from student surveys. (Bradley) A recommendation will come through College Council and everyone's vote would be representative there. If there is not broad support for this proposal, there are other ways of meeting student demand for shorter within our current calendar. (J. Stearns) There will be a Faculty union vote on the 16-week calendar as calendar is a bargainable item. (G. Baxley)
- Have not had a meeting with Chris Mutshnick because Student Life should design what the schedule would look like on their own. Use the student's efforts to integrate with the concepts that have been developed. Have been to ASCC three times around a shorter calendar and they are anxious to have it implemented. Early or late concerns have not been brought forward at this time. (J. Stearns)
- Block schedule would impact both campuses as the times would have to match. (Gottlieb)
- Classroom availability may be less of a problem with scheduling due to the increase in online classes. (Clark)
- Currently on a 16-week schedule at CMC and have regimented time when evening access may be available—not able to extend class based upon when high school ends and the students have to go to dinner. (Haisch) Most programmatic changes won't be impacted by a 16-week calendar while working with CMC and their programmatic offerings—3:45 p.m. section and the section that goes into the evening. It would be a matter of looking at what our programmatic impacts are and helping other programs that are involved. An example would be Admissions and Records and working around the high-volume times. (Kutil)

16-Week Calendar Open Forum

November 15, 2024

12:00 p.m., Room 3134

Overview

Dr. Stearns opened with an overview. A calendar change had been in discussion for more than a decade and it's apparent that it's a bigger decision than the Calendar Committee's to bring forward. Leadership retreats in 2019 and 2020 focused on the idea of an alternative schedule and launched conversation

with chairs, deans, and cabinet as to what is necessary to have in place and what process is needed to make it a reality.

A task force was launched in 2022 and did the initial work to revamp the schedule under the minimum requirements for adoption. Steering committee was launched in April 2024 and has met every week through summer-to-date and expanded the essential elements.

Academic Calendar

Dr. Curtis shared the new slide indicating the online location of the 16-week calendar information. Based upon the schedule shown, grades would be due Wednesday, 12/23 at noon. This may be revised by backing the term up one week and allow more space for end of fall semester tasks.

More year-round programs, such as Paramedic, accelerated RN/LVN, and Aviation Maintenance would be able to get in 12 weeks of classes between the end of spring and the beginning of the fall term. Six-week courses could also be fit in back-to-back during the summer session—thinking now of 4's and 8's—but there are lots of possibilities.

The proposed schedule meets the mandated 175 instructional days and holidays.

Scheduling Grid

Bret Clark indicated that for a five-unit lecture meeting twice a week, class time would be 2 hours and 25 minutes. A one-unit lab that met once a week would previously have been 2 hours and 50 minutes. It is now 3 hours and 5 minutes.

The scheduling block shows a top row (Count) of how many sections are being offered/day/week. Since no 4-unit, 3 day per week classes are being offered, perhaps it makes pedagogical sense to offer these courses. Similarly with 5-unit, 4 day per week classes.

Alex Kahane shared that classes are no longer crossing the 12:15 hour so that students can move from one class to the next. Someone can take a morning class, and with a hard start, take another once the 12:15 hour begins.

Schedule also permits a college hour, but perhaps only having this on Tues/Thurs or Mon/Weds. The schedule is built out until 10:30 p.m. to facilitate those disciplines with specialized classrooms to stack their classes back-to-back. The extended hours also serve students from all walks of life. Evening options may be helpful for students to attend after work—with an opportunity to take as many as two classes. (Kahane)

Questions and Comments

- Concern that administration is not supporting the move to the 16-week calendar is unfounded. Dr. Stearns indicated that her job in the work thus far has been to facilitate the exploration and envisioning. She has been clear that a calendar change will not impact her, nor many management and classified professionals. It will, however, change for faculty, students, and the governance process as a month of time for meeting will be lost.
- Students likely have a significant awareness for a shorter calendar due to our proximity to Cal Poly and Allan Hancock. Will rely on experts to have students attend the Cougar social hour to help design what the schedule will look like. (J Stearns)

- Is it possible to have college hour on Monday and Tuesday as some students take MWF and TTH classes? (DePuy) Classes most commonly run multiple days on MW or TTH. For the ease of having a regular schedule with regular start times, if a college hour is going to happen, it needs to be on MW or TTH. (Kahane)
- Realistically, there are at most, only two blocks of classes that students would be able to take in the morning. (Clark)
- Balance between being practical for students to be able to transition to the next class, and those that have a specific time period and need to get their one class in during that block. Parents may try to take one class while their child is in school or attend in the morning because they need to work in the afternoon. A 20- or 30-minute gap in a schedule will allow the student to take advantage of tutoring services, have a counseling appointment, visit financial aid, or meet with a study group. Breaks will allow an opportunity to engage more with what our campus has to offer. (Kahane)
- One of the challenges of registration is overlapping classes, even when registering early. Student representing Cuestionian said she's introducing the new schedule concept to students and promoting it. Students will be interested in having a more intentional schedule.
- With a college hour, there will be more students, staff, and faculty eating at that mid-day time and may be an opportunity to explore more food options on campus. (Clark)
- The campus hour could be used for a proactive outreach to student services. (Wethington)
- Faculty available during the campus hour may not be functional as it would conflict with club advising. (Limon)
- A draft 4-, 6-, 8- or 12-week summer schedule is in the works. It will be less tricky than fall and spring as students typically take 1 class, as opposed to multiple classes. (Kahane) Alternative is to have an official 12-week summer. Some courses are for the 12 weeks, but within that there may be three 4-week blocks or two 6-week blocks. It will be essential to make sure the start and end dates align. A student could also take an 8-week and a 4-week within that same period. (J Stearns)
- Student Services and Basic Needs are available after normal working hours, and food may be delivered by Basic Needs to the classroom, if requested. (DePuy)
- Student Education Plan data to look at demand for courses is available and would be helpful to division chairs that are trying to plan schedules. (Smith) Knowing what courses to schedule based upon the number of students needing it in their plans will help in building a schedule. (Kahane)
- Reflected in the presentation is in-person instruction, it does not display a hybrid option. (J Stearns)

- The Chancellor’s Office has provided feedback and we have already made adjustments. (J Stearns)

16-Week Calendar Open Forum

November 20, 2024

12:00 p.m., Room 5401

Overview

Thanks to CCCUE for providing pizza for the attendees.

Dr. Curtis shared that there are different motivating factors to move from a 17- or 18- week calendar to a shorter one. Community colleges have moved to 16-, 16+2, and 17-week calendars, but Cuesta has resisted change, mostly because of factors involving funding which have disincentivized the move. Now with regulatory changes, it’s become more beneficial to again explore.

As of April of this year, the 16-Week Calendar Steering Committee has worked on finding unified start times, maximizing how we use our summer, and working with partial term offerings, such as two 8-week or 4-week courses. Studies have shown that students do better in shorter courses and are better able to focus. Work has also been done in looking toward expanding summer to a robust schedule, providing face-to-face classes, and building student services.

Academic Calendar

Dr. Curtis indicated that 12-week courses in the summer for year-round programs will still experience a break before and after the course begins and ends. And while 12-week courses are possible, summer may also have 4- or 8-week courses.

The District’s Calendar Committee is comprised of all bargaining groups. They are responsible for the flow of the calendar, instituting the Chancellor’s mandated holidays, and how the academic term should land, including grades.

Why are we looking at shortening our schedule? Cal Poly has been instructed by the State of California and CSU Chancellor’s Office to move from quarters to semesters. They are going to a 15+1 semester. We can’t match them for shorter, as our shortest possible term is 16 weeks. Cal Poly will be moving to semesters in Fall 2025 and we are looking at making the move from 18 to 16 weeks at the same time.

Scheduling Grid

A one unit class meets for at least 16 hours, we aim for 17 or 18. A lab is three times as much. A class that meets 3 hours per week will experience the class getting a bit longer—approximately 5 minutes per hour on the average.

No firm decision exists on the college hour. It is possible to have it every day, but there would be a block of time when nothing is occurring and it wouldn’t be the best use of space if all classrooms were vacant one hour per day. Also, idleness may not be viewed positively, particularly when the college is receiving

bond funds. Food services would be impacted with just one existing food truck available to respond to the needs of additional faculty, staff, and students.

Moving to a 16-week calendar will impact: 1) when students and faculty are on campus, 2) when classrooms are available for repair and upgrade, 3) a shortened calendar for meetings, including budget, and 4) timelines for scheduling, registering, and support services.

Questions and Comments

- Will there be more Friday classes? (Fiscalini) That will be a likely outcome, but not a driving factor to move to a 16-week calendar. Most students choose a two class per week option. We would need to build a schedule with a robust Friday to make it worthwhile for students to attend on Friday. (Dr. Curtis)
- Dr. Stearns working with Student Life and Leadership. Parents have advocated for class on Fridays and that feedback will help shape the Friday schedule. (Dr. Coria)
- We will not know the trickle-down effect after implementing a shortened calendar. It may impact fiscal with shorter purchasing timeframes, but full impact may not be known for months. (Carter)
- Was a previous student here and wished there had been more evening offerings. (T. Sullivan)
- Will a winter session be offered? (M Carroll) There is extra time in January or around the winter holidays that would permit a 3- or 4-week winter intersession. We are not proposing this now, however. It is difficult to build a long enough term for it to be an effective session. Campus support services for students also wouldn't be available for 2 weeks during that time—it just doesn't appear to be the right time to offer class to students. (Dr. Curtis)
- If departments are interested in teaching during the winter intersession, the 16-Week Calendar Steering Committee and CCFT would want to know. With the reality of fall ending and submitting grades, not many faculty are wanting to start a new class on 12/23, or have a quiz on 12/31. It is challenging.

16-Week Calendar Open Forum

November 22, 2024

12:00 p.m., Room 3134

Overview

Thanks to CCFT for providing pizza for the attendees.

Dr. Kahane began with introducing the 16-Week Calendar Steering Committee members. She indicated that past CCFT President Wes Sims advocated to resurrect the 16-Week Calendar following COVID and determine the feasibility of moving forward.

Academic Calendar

Dr. Coria shared the calendar which reflected summer starting on June 8th and ending on July 17th; fall starting on August 31st and ending December 18th; and spring beginning January 25th and ending May 21st. Bret Clark indicated that there is a possibility of taking Thanksgiving week off, and people will have the opportunity to weigh in on the decision. If it is taken off, the fall and spring semesters would then mirror one another in length of term and number of holidays. Taking the week off would also necessitate starting a week earlier. (Clark) Flex days, while outside of the term, would still be paid. (Baxley)

Scheduling Grid

The District currently has a term length multiplier of 17.5. This is calculated by figuring the average of 17 weeks in spring and 18 weeks in fall. That number designates how many contact hours will be paid based upon how a particular class is scheduled. A 3-unit class meeting for 3 hours per week X 17.5 equals 52.5 hours of contact. The new multiplier is used to figure the number of contact hours needed each week under a shorter number of weeks. (Clark)

Welding and auto classes are not in favor of a college hour as classes are currently scheduled back-to-back. Same with architecture. (D. Fernandez) If found, additional facilities would relieve the issue of limited space. Some students are in class 8 hours a day taking 3 classes per day. If you make the instructional day longer, it will be more difficult for the student.

Having college hour when all students are not able to attend may be acceptable only during a transitional period. If a college hour is made, all students should be able to attend. College hour will need to be determined and whether it is synchronous with North County or not. (Kahane)

Questions and Comments

- The grid will impact the way classes are scheduled in rooms.
- Has lab space been considered? Lab space is very limited and automotive lab goes hour-to-hour with no openings. Automotive was flagged last spring as an area that needs facility space. They are booked from morning to evening, and Fridays are booked, as well. The committee was charged with identifying divisions with limited space, and automotive was tagged as being one of those areas. (Kahane)
- Athletics on that list? Not currently, but if limited space is the norm, please send the schedule to the committee so they may be aware of what is needed. (Kahane)
- Calendar committee will be deciding whether Thanksgiving week is a work week or not. They will seek input from campus-at-large in making that decision. (Baxley)
- Will the calendar align with K-12 schools? Probably not as all K-12 schools do not align with each other--particularly in spring break when schools have differing weeks off. The proposed fall term would not start in advance of the K-12 schools. (Clark)

- Will Calendar Committee put out a survey with start and stop dates? Yes, in coordination with CCFT. (Baxley)
- Flexibility of Calendar Committee is limited as ending date impacts submitting grades in winter. Starting earlier runs into problems with summer being long enough for a 12-week course. There's only about a week to move the block forward or back in spring and fall. (Baxley)
- Impact to lab technicians regarding hours and days will be addressed at the December 6th forum. (Carter)
- If you see something on the grid that needs attention, email the committee to submit feedback. (Kahane)
- When will Calendar Committee and faculty survey results be distributed? After forums are complete, a proposal will be sent to the Calendar Committee. After they receive the proposal, it is anticipated that they will provide a campus-wide survey. (Kahane)
- 16-Week proposal will need to be firmed up in the spring semester, and the Calendar Committee, Board of Trustees, and Chancellor's Office will all have an opportunity for review and input. (Kahane)
- What about the workload for projects outside of teaching? (Haisch) That is on the list of items that need to be addressed by the committee. That would include participatory governance in fewer weeks each semester. There is preliminary discussion of initial committee meetings during flex week and then hit the ground running during the teaching weeks. (Kahane)
- Are final exams part of the CCFT survey? There has been some discussion about eliminating finals week and making it another week of instruction. In the recent survey, 42% of faculty wanted to retain the regular finals week structure, 28% preferred a regular week of classes, 30% did not have an opinion. Written comments, however, were passionate about keeping the current structure. (Baxley)
- A non-zero number of students may want to leave campus during the college hour and potentially create traffic issues and accidents. Will add this concern to the list, and we'll try to have enough food support for our students during the college hour and places for them to sit. We need to seek out other colleges in our geographical area that have a college hour and examine how they handle them. (Kahane)
- With 3-hour lab spots, it's not feasible to have 2 labs in the morning, so that is the reason for having the college hour at 11 and not later. The committee will review this, as well. (Kahane)

- There will probably be disappointment for some people depending on whatever calendar is chosen. It will be impossible to make everyone happy. (Baxley)
- The faculty union will vote in spring on the 16-week calendar. Vote will be binding on moving forward; if voted against, it would be difficult for the District to move forward. (Baxley)

16-Week Calendar Open Forum

December 6, 2024

12:00 p.m., Room 5401

Overview

Thanks to CCCUE for providing pizza for the attendees.

Dr. Stearns shared that the purpose of the forum is to inform and gather questions from those impacted by the calendar change. Sixty-seven of the seventy-three state's community colleges are already on an alternate calendar, most of them on a 16-week calendar.

Academic Calendar

Dr. Curtis began by sharing that the academic calendar is the work of the District's Calendar Committee, a multi-stakeholder group with representatives from CCFT and CCCUE. The committee gets together at this time of year and looks toward ensuring that the academic calendar contains the necessary components, e.g., mandated state holidays and 175 instructional days.

Scheduling Grid

Dr. Kahane indicated that the college hour was revisited last week. To move it later from the 11:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. timeframe would move courses, particularly lab classes, back into unacceptably late times. Division Chairs at Instructional Cabinet were asked that as they are creating a fall schedule, to create a mock-up using the scheduling grid to determine where their classes would fit in.

Questions and Comments

- The impact to lab techs needs to be acknowledged (with 4 weeks less of classes), as well as those individuals who have 10- or 11-month appointments.
- Passing time is listed as 10 minutes, but realistically 30 minutes is needed to clean up and turn over the labs. Kahane indicated that it needs to be reviewed and could be a 15 or 20 minute turn over and/or clean up while students are still finishing. (Kahane)
- Having a class end time later than 10 p.m. would not be preferred. Kahane indicated that she understood and it's an important consideration for the work day.
- How will it affect athletics? Pre-season conditioning classes? 3C2A constitution currently states, fall sports are allowed to begin August 15 and spring sports January 15. (Geiger)

This can be accommodated as the schedule can be built so that there are opportunities year-round to schedule classes. (Stearns)

- Becci Carter and Jacquelyn Contreras have served as CCCUE reps on the Calendar Committee and brought forth a number of considerations, namely job descriptions, that will have specific impacts (e.g., Children's Center). Must work with the center to determine impact of change to center and parents. (Stearns)
- Will the new schedule impact the center's Public Safety or Custodial staffing services? (Young) Likely, not yet determined. We need to ensure that we are maintaining similar coverage even though the schedule is different. (Stearns)
- Time between each semester is very important to EEPS division because revamping, cleaning, and restocking of classrooms is required. If a summer session backs up to fall, that may be a problem. No one will be forced to only run 12-week summer courses, and an 8-week course with more time at the end is possible. No one will be pressured to turn over facilities before they are able to do so. (Curtis)
- On a 10-month (4 day/week) calendar in Student Success Center as an Instructional Aide. There are 2 other aides with a 5 day/week schedule. It will be challenging how on/off duty is determined under new calendar. There may be better use of Friday or Saturday class schedules to get to the 175 instructional days. It may not be a full class schedule on Saturdays, but it will impact discussion with custodial and public safety coverage. Because day may get longer for lab techs, there may be consideration for someone opening in the morning and someone working in the afternoon until the end of the day. (Curtis) Instructional Aides would have to plan for supporting students on Saturday when there is instruction. (Martin)
- In terms of larger Facilities projects outside of maintenance and custodial, has there been discussion about how Facilities will be impacted by a more tightly packed schedule with students/faculty on campus? (Sullivan) Already a consideration. We are shortening the primary terms, and there will be a bigger opportunity for Facilities space planning to do larger work. The rhythm of work may change over winter and summer breaks. (Stearns) Much work is done now on Fridays, but if class is taught on Fridays, that work would have an additional two weeks after the term to be available. (Curtis)
- Saturday as instructional days? We must offer a certain number of hours on Saturdays as instructional days. We already count Saturdays as the Construction Technology program meets on Saturdays, as well as clinicals in LVN and accelerated RN programs. We would not have to do anything more, but part of what the Chancellor's Office is encouraging is to consider shorter term courses for working adults who want to take college classes. (Curtis)
- How will we fit involvement in campus committees with a shorter schedule? The pace of governance has to be faster because there is a month less over the year. We are moving the start or stop of the term, not the work. Does flex include the start of the governance committees? Maybe we use flex days for that. (Stearns) If stipends are necessary to complete work over the summer, the college can arrange that. (Curtis)
- How will the longer teaching days impact Custodial crews? Are new staff needed? Will they need to work longer hours? Can anything be done with the delay in bringing staff on? Do we go to alternative schedules or weekends? They are all factors of negotiation.

Much of onboarding is out of our control, order of operations or building may change, but square footage is not increasing. (Richerson) Some colleges have custodial working during the day. We may need to look at that. (Curtis) Looked at room usage and utilization, classrooms are available most of the time. Highly specialized rooms is where the challenges lie, including auto tech and chem labs. (Stearns)

Next steps. Continue to adjust and answer questions, then launch the governance review. Open the doors for every group that wants to bring forward results to see where our campus stands. We will engage students in January with the Student Life and Leadership team. We already have approval from the Chancellor's Office. The work of the steering committee has received a green light. It doesn't commit us to moving—that is an institutional decision. If the decision is to move, that will go to the Board. All of the heavy lifting, such as putting together the proposal, designing schedules, and guides for Instructional Specialists relied on for scheduling classes, has been done. (Stearns)